

Application No. 10/711,457
Amendment dated October 6, 2005
Reply to Office Action of July 6, 2005

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed July 6, 2005. Claims 1-18 remain pending in the application and stand rejected. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended herein.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner, Gregory Blankenship, for the telephone interview with Applicants' representative, David W. Dorton, on October 4, 2005. During the interview, the rejections of independent claims 1, 10 and 16 over the applied references, U.S. Patent Nos. 6,698,814 to Mills et al., 6,619,718 to Tiesler, and 5,720,509 to Binish, were discussed. The Examiner agreed that the rejections of claims 1, 10 and 16 over Mills '814 in view of Tiesler '718, and the rejection of claim 10 over the combination of Mills '814, Tiesler '718 and Binish '509 should not stand. The Examiner also indicated that amending claims 1 and 16 to recite that the cover layer comprises polymeric material would overcome the rejections of those claims over the combination of Mills '814, Tiesler '718 and Binish '509, as noted in the Interview Summary, dated October 4, 2005. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended in this manner and Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following remarks.

Information Disclosure Statement

As an initial matter, Applicants note that several references were cited in two separate Supplemental Information Disclosure Statements filed electronically on March 31, 2005, in addition to the Information Disclosure Statement electronically filed with the Application on September 20, 2004. The supplemental disclosures were filed

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to comply with 37 C.F.R. §1.56 by apprising the Office of references cited in related U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/708,312. Due to the large number of references cited in the supplemental disclosures, the electronic IDS had to be filed in two separate batches. The first batch contained citations to 50 U.S. Patent Documents and 10 published U.S. Applications. The second batch contained citations to only two U.S. Patent Documents. Applicants note that initialed and signed copies of only the September 20, 2004 IDS and the Supplemental IDS containing the two additional U.S. Patent Document citations were returned in the Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that a signed and initialed copy of the March 31, 2005 IDS containing the 50 U.S. Patent Document citations and 10 published U.S. Application citations be provided in the next communication from the Office.

Amendment to the Specification

The specification has been amended to correctly reference related pending U.S. Application Serial No. 10/708,312, filed February 24, 2004.

Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-7, 10-13 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,698,814 to Mills et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,619,718 to Tiesler. Claims 1, 10 and 16 are the only independent claims of this rejected group. Claim 1 is directed to an automotive visor including a cover layer "integrally molded onto said outer surface of said core member." Claims 10 and 16 are

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directed to methods of forming an automotive visor, and each recites "integrally molding a cover layer on an outer surface of the visor core."

During the telephone interview on October 4, 2005, the Examiner agreed that claims 1, 10 and 16 were not taught or suggested by Mills '814 in view of Tiesler '718. Mills '814 is directed to an automotive visor 10 including a core 12 and a separate cover material 14 "typically made of fabric, including synthetics and natural fabrics," (Mills '814 at col. 3, lines 11-13). The core has a "clam shell" configuration, with first and second core halves 20, 22 that may be folded about a living hinge portion 24. (Mills '814 at col. 3, lines 26-37.) The cover material 14 is secured to the core 12 by wrapping the cover 14 around the peripheral lips 60, 62 of each core half 20, 22 and folding the core halves about the living hinge 24 to capture the edges 58 of the cover 14 between the core halves. (Mills '814 at col. 3, line 52-col. 4, line 13.) The material of the core 12 is then melted to interlock with the interstices of the cover material. (Mills '814 at col. 4, lines 13-19.) Accordingly, Mills '814 does not teach or suggest a cover layer that is integrally molded to an outer surface of a core member.

Tiesler '718 does not teach or suggest a modification of Mills '814 that cures this deficiency. Rather, Tiesler '718 is directed to a modular sun visor having upper and lower visor bezels that can be attached to different sized visor blades.

Tiesler '718 states:

The lower and upper visor blade portions 18, 20 are typically made from a molded polymer such as a high crystalline polypropylene (HCCP), and are then covered with a cloth material (not shown). Of course, other material can be used, including polymers molded with a finished surface to obviate the need for the cloth covering.

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(Tiesler '718 at col. 2, lines 60-65.) Accordingly, Tiesler '718 only suggests replacing a separate cloth cover material with a textured polymeric cover material. Tiesler '718 does not teach or suggest that this textured polymeric cover material be anything other than a sheet of material that can be substituted for the cloth material, and therefore does not teach or suggest integrally molding a cover layer onto the outer surface of a core member. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 1, 10 and 16 over Mills '814 in view of Tiesler '718 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-7 each depend from Independent claim 1, and claims 11-13 depend from independent claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants assert that claims 2-7 and 11-13 are each in condition for allowance for at least the reasons stated above for their respective independent claims and Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

Claims 8, 9, 14, 15, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mills '814 and Tiesler '718 in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,720,509 to Binish. Claims 8 and 9 depend from independent claim 1, claims 14 and 15 depend from independent claim 10, and claims 17 and 18 depend from independent claim 16. While Applicants believe that the references of record do not teach or suggest the claimed invention, claims 1 and 16 have been amended herein to more clearly distinguish the claimed invention. Specifically, claims 1 and 16 have been amended to recite "a polymeric cover layer integrally molded onto said outer surface of said core member." Support for this amendment can be found in the application at paragraph 18, and with reference to claim 10. Accordingly, no new matter has been

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added by these amendments.

During the telephone interview on October 4, 2005, the Examiner agreed that claim 10 was not taught or suggested by the combination of Mills '814, Tiesler '718 and Binish '509, and that the amendments to claims 1 and 16 would overcome these rejections. Specifically, the combination of Mills '814 and Tiesler '718 does not teach or suggest a polymeric cover layer integrally molded onto an outer surface of a core member of an automotive visor, for the reasons discussed above. The combination of Mills '814 and Tiesler '718 with Binish '509 fails to cure these deficiencies. Specifically, Binish '509 is directed to a visor assembly including a "suitable fabric covering such as upholstery material 23 and 43, respectively, which . . . is placed in the mold prior to the molding process." (Binish '509 at col. 3, lines 14-17.) "Polymeric material is then injected into the mold cavity within the spaced between the fabric panels." (Binish '509 at col. 3, lines 61-62.) Binish '509, therefore, does not teach or suggest integrally molding a polymeric cover layer, as required by claims 1, 10 and 16, nor does it disclose how this could be done.

Claims 8, 9, 14, 15, 17 and 18 each include the features recited in their respective independent claims. Accordingly, Applicants assert that claims 8, 9, 14, 15, 17 and 18 are not taught or suggested by Mills '814 and Tiesler '718 in further view of Binish '509 for the same reasons discussed above for respective independent claims 1, 10 and 16, and respectfully request that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the remarks set forth herein, Applicants respectfully believe this case is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes any issue requires further discussion, the Examiner is respectfully asked to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the matter maybe promptly resolved. The Examiner's prompt attention to this matter is appreciated.

Applicants are of the opinion that no fee is due as a result of this amendment. If any charges or credits are necessary to complete this communication, please apply them to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,

WOOD, HERRON & EVANS, L.L.P.

By: 

David W. Dorton, Reg. No. 51,625

2700 Carew Tower
441 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 241-2324 (voice)
(513) 241-6234 (facsimile)